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ART 34 AMDT

We claim:

1. An addition copolymer composed of
 - a) from 30 to 79.5% by weight of N-vinylpyrrolidone
 - b) from 20 to 69.5% by weight of vinyl acetate
 - c) from 0.5 to 25% by weight of a monovinyl ester of a C₄ to C₂₀ monocarboxylic acid
 - d) from 0 to 40% by weight of a further, copolymerizable, ethylenically unsaturated compound,
- the percentages by weight in each case being based on the said copolymer.
2. A copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein c) comprises the monovinyl ester of a branched monocarboxylic acid having at least one tertiary or quaternary carbon atom.
 3. A copolymer as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein c) comprises the monovinyl ester of a C₅ to C₁₅ monocarboxylic acid.
 4. A copolymer as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein c) comprises the monovinyl ester of a Versatic acid.
 5. An aqueous solution or dispersion of the copolymer as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4.
 6. The use of a copolymer or of its aqueous solution or dispersion, as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, as a thickener for an aqueous polymer dispersion.
 7. An aqueous polymer dispersion comprising as thickener a copolymer as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4.
 8. An aqueous dispersion as claimed in claim 6, which comprises a dispersion of a free-radically polymerized polymer, of a polyester or of a polyurethane.

9. An aqueous dispersion as claimed in claim 8, wherein said free-radically polymerized polymer is a polymer composed to the extent of more than 50% by weight of principal monomers selected from C₁ to C₁₈ alkyl (meth)acrylates, vinyl esters of C₁ to C₂₀ carboxylic acids, vinylaromatic compounds having up to 20 carbon atoms, vinyl halides, nonaromatic hydrocarbons having one or two conjugated double bonds, or mixtures of these monomers.
- 10 10. An aqueous dispersion as claimed in any of claims 7 to 9, containing from 0.2 to 20 parts by weight of the thickening copolymer per 100 parts by weight of the dispersed polymer.

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